

Routledge Research in Arts Education

ARTIST-TEACHER PRACTICE AND THE EXPECTATION OF AN AESTHETIC LIFE

CREATIVE BEING IN THE NEOLIBERAL CLASSROOM

Carol Wild

ROUTLEDGE

- What can the 'turn' to the ideal of artist-teacher practice in England at the beginning of the twenty-first century reveal about contemporary experiences of teachers and students in schools?
- What 'ways-of-being' does classroom-oriented artist-teacher practice model and make possible?
- What is it that classroom-oriented artist-teacher practice still has the potential to do?

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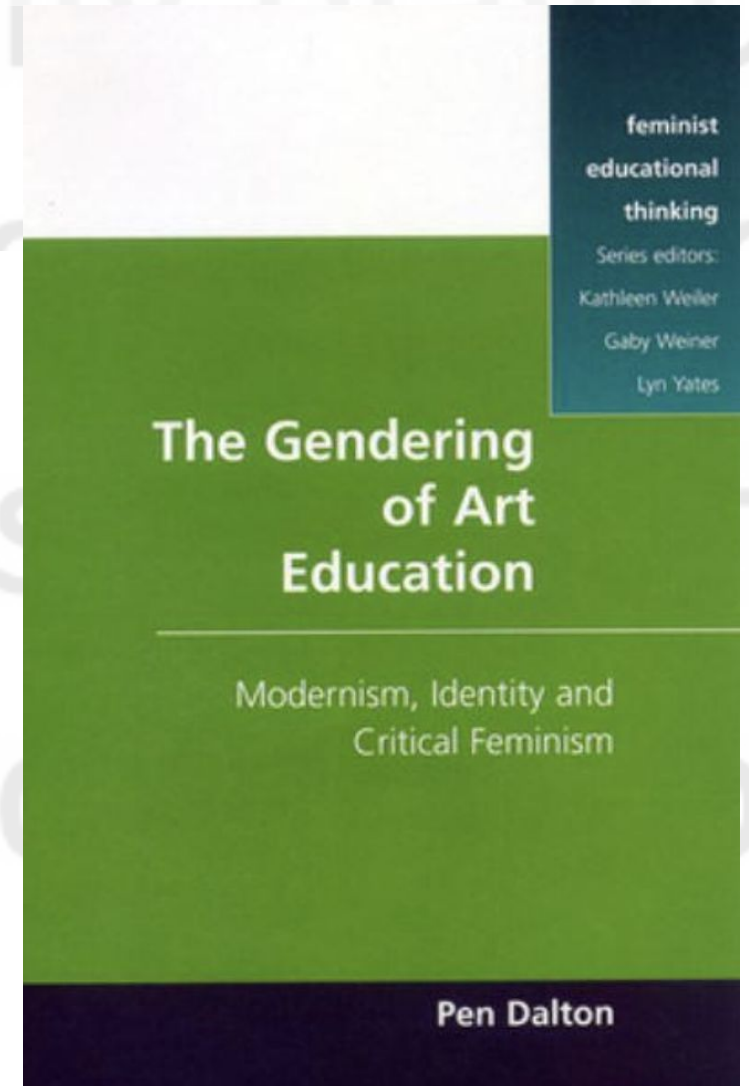
Artist-teacher practice holds open a space of playful inquiry through which the order of art and design education may be reconfigured, bringing minor relations and ways-of-being to the fore. It resists the instrumentalism of art and design education to prepare a people to have the expectation of an aesthetic life.

On having no expectation of an aesthetic life

Dalton, P. (2001) *The gendering of art education: Modernism, identity and critical feminism*. Open University Press

“There was a tacit distinction between the ‘higher’ discipline of teaching drawing and design and the ‘lower discipline of teaching art. The former was associated with national economic purposes and aspired to academic respectability; the latter connoted ‘play’ and modest learning. The National Society of Art Masters encouraged its members to pursue high levels of technical accomplishment as measured by its own examination system ... The Art Teachers Guild on the other hand was much more concerned with tactical approaches necessary for encouraging an essential creativity ... *in children not specifically destined for an aesthetic way of life*”

(Thistlewood cited in Dalton 2001, p.59 italics mine)



On having no expectation of an aesthetic life

Eisner, E.W. (2002). *The arts and the creation of mind*. Yale University Press.

Bernstein, B. (2000). *Pedagogy, symbolic control, and identity (Revised Edition)*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

An anaesthetic suppresses feeling; it dulls the senses. It renders you numb to feeling. What is aesthetic heightens feeling. What is aesthetic is pervaded by an emotional tone made possible by the process of being engaged in a work of art.

(Eisner 2002, p. 81)

What is an art and design classroom? - Movement

oscillation of perpetually returning flows

Thompson, G. and Cook, I. (2014) 'The eternal return of teaching in the time of the corporation'. *Deleuze Studies*, 8(2), pp. 280–298.

choreography

Youdell, D. and Armstrong, F. (2011) 'A politics beyond subjects: The affective choreographies and smooth spaces of schooling'. *Emotion, Space and Society*, 4(3), pp. 144–150.

a (political) ecology

Bennett, J. (2010) *Vibrant matter: A political ecology of things*. Duke University Press

The eternal return of the (art & design) teacher in the time of the corporation

Deleuze, G. (1992) 'Postscript on the Societies of Control'. *October*, 59, pp. 3–7.

Thompson, G. and Cook, I. (2014a) 'The eternal return of teaching in the time of the corporation'. *Deleuze Studies*, 8(2), pp. 280–298.

- The classroom is formed by oscillations of the far-away and close-by
- a new apparatus of 'control' that weakens the duty of care
- the 'dividual' (no longer known and cared for as an individual person but as data)
- prevented from caring in ways that are recognisable to the teacher as teaching
(and no longer feeling 'cared for' themselves)
- The equilibrium of classroom flows is disrupted.

Some are perceived to have more potential than others

Penketh, C. (2016) 'Special educational needs and art and design education: Plural perspectives on exclusion'. *Journal of Education Policy*, 31(4), pp. 432–442. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02680939.2015.1113570>

- Penketh (2016) is able to apply concepts from the field of disability studies (epistemic invalidation) to art & design education because of a perceived shared 'otherness' and 'vulnerability' within neoliberal education policy.
- characterised by a lack of recognition of both current and potential ways-of-being
- To have value a subject (with both meanings of the word) must be perceived to have economic worth and potential.

Artist-teacher practice as entrepreneurial care of self

Jagodzinski, J. (2012) 'The hijacking of creativity: The dilemma of contemporary art education'. In Addison, N. and Burgess, L. (Eds.). *Debates in Art and Design Education*. London: Routledge pp. 34–45.

- neoliberal creativity propels us towards differentiation,
- transcendental, driven by an innate deficit or lack.
- must continually be increasing and demonstrating one's achievements and future worth in order to be recognised.
- Artist-Teacher CPD?

Desire then is to fulfil our lack of being so that it coincides with a more fulfilling life: a healthy beautiful body, the order of the Good, to be number one at one's profession, and so on.

(Jagodzinski 2012, p.31)

Artist-teacher practice as a 'practice of freedom'

Fornet-Betancourt, R., Becker, H., Gomez-Müller, A. and Gauthier, J.D. (1987) 'The ethic of care for the self as a practice of freedom' An interview with Michel Foucault on January 20, 1984. *Philosophy & Social Criticism*, 12 (2–3), pp. 112–131. <https://doi.org/10.1177/019145378701200202>

Foucault, M. (2005) *The hermeneutics of the subject: Lectures at the Collège de France 1981--1982*. London: Palgrave Macmillan

Thompson, K. (2003) 'Forms of resistance: Foucault on tactical reversal and selfformation'. *Continental Philosophy Review*, 36(2), pp. 113–138.

- 'What is this self I must take care of in order to be able to take care of the others I must govern properly?' (Foucault 2005, p.39)

Self-formation is not self-fabrication. To produce something is to impose static form upon recalcitrant matter, to stamp being into becoming... and to manufacture oneself as a product, to merely fabricate oneself would thus be nothing other than rendering oneself pliant to the standards of experimentation, calculation, exchange, and consumption embodied in the regimes of governmental technologies. (Thompson 2003, p.131)

Artist-teacher practice as care for others (specifically the work-of-art)

Fornet-Betancourt, R., Becker, H., Gomez-Müller, A. and Gauthier, J.D. (1987) 'The ethic of care for the self as a practice of freedom' An interview with Michel Foucault on January 20, 1984. *Philosophy & Social Criticism*, 12 (2–3), pp. 112–131. <https://doi.org/10.1177/019145378701200202>

Foucault, M. (2005) *The hermeneutics of the subject: Lectures at the Collège de France 1981--1982*. London: Palgrave Macmillan

- 'What is this self I must take care of in order to be able to take care of the others I must govern properly?' (Foucault 2005, p.39) - turns the therapeutics of self-care into a matter of responsibility for one's relations with others rather than simply care for oneself.

Artist-teacher practice as care for others (specifically the work-of-art)

the question can be reframed:

'what must be taken care of so that all made possible by the art & design classroom may continue to live fully, creatively and well?'

**How does caring for the work of art
through artist-teacher practice challenge
instrumentalised relations and give
potential to new ways-of-being in the
classroom?**

Log

Zoe about her log: *...they all wanted to know why it was here... I told them exactly why, which I wouldn't have done otherwise and they instantly were like Oh! We totally get that. And a lot of them were so, what are you going to do with it? Are you going to carve your Dad's face into it? And like... I replied I don't know that I am going to do that with it, but that's right, 'What am I going to do with it?' And the other teacher noticed it and was like, you know I've heard some really interesting conversations about your log.*

Log

...because it was like, it became something, it was about me remembering Dad and it wasn't about, it didn't have anything to say to anyone else. (emphasis mine). By implication, the log that was brought into the classroom did have something to say.

Bennet's political ecology - Ranciere

Lewis, T.E. (2009) 'Education in the realm of the senses: Understanding Paulo Freire's aesthetic unconscious through Jacques Rancière'. *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 43(2), pp. 285–299. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9752.2009.01627.x>

Rancière, J. (1991) *The ignorant schoolmaster* (Vol. 1). Translated by K. Ross. Stanford University Press.

Rancière, J. (2004) *The Politics of aesthetics: the distribution of the sensible*. Edited and translated by S. Corcoran. London, UK: Continuum.

Rancière, J. (2014) *The emancipated spectator*. Translated by G. Elliott. Verso Books

- The politics of aesthetics 'determin(es) what presents itself' (Ranciere 2004, p.12).
- The work-of-art as a third thing:

...blur(s) boundaries between what can and cannot be said, can and cannot be seen, thus expanding, reconfiguring, hybridizing/mixing notions of what is common to a community. (Lewis 2009, p.289)

The thirdspace of the heterotopia

Masschelein, J. and Simons, M. (2013). In defence of the school: A public issue education, Culture & Society Publishers.
<https://philarchive.org/archive/MASIDO-2>

- A place of disarray
- A place of play
- A place of care

“... no longer a ‘slave’ of the economy, nor of the social order, nor of the domestic sphere and their so-called ‘realism’... One who surrenders to her love for technique (or, in a more general sense, her love for the subject or for the world). (2013. p.113)



They were showing me prints that they had made or their students had made. They just talked with such warmth about their whole careers but they did it in a way through the prints, so it was really nice thinking about some of the changes that had happened for them, sometimes really simple things, like (they'd) been there before the GCSEs and after the GCSEs and just going through and having a real conversation about that got me thinking about what I do...

The teachers made present by artist teacher practice

Carlin, M. and Wallin, J. (eds.). (2015) Deleuze and Guattari, politics and education: For a people yet-to-come. Bloomsbury Publishing USA.

Deleuze, G., & Guattari, F. (1994) What is philosophy?, Translated by G. Burchell and H. Tomlinson. Verso.

Sholtz, J. (2015) The Invention of a People: Heidegger and Deleuze on Art and the Political, Edinburgh University Press.

Wallin, J.J. (2011) 'What is? Curriculum theorizing: For a people yet to come'. Studies in Philosophy and Education, 30(3), pp. 285–301.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11217-010-9210-y>

He got the wrong people, earth, and blood. For the race summoned forth by art or philosophy is not the one that claims to be pure but rather an oppressed, bastard, lower, anarchical, nomadic, and irremediably minor race ... Artaud said: to write for the illiterate-to speak for the aphasic, to think for the acephalous. But what does "for" mean? It is not "for their benefit," or yet "in their place." It is "before." It is a question of becoming. (1994, p.109)

The minor interventions of artist-teacher practice

Sholtz, J. (2015) *The Invention of a People: Heidegger and Deleuze on Art and the Political*, Edinburgh University Press.

Tamboukou, M. (2004) 'Educational heterotopias and the self'. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*, 12(3), pp. 399–414.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/14681360400200209>

Tamboukou, M. (2012) 'Heterotopic and holey spaces as tents for the nomad: rereading Gwen John's letters'. *Gender, Place & Culture*, 19(3), pp.

275–290. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0966369X.2011.624587>

“Minor practices like this have the potential to draw a people together. These practices are always localised, specific and transitory, because otherwise they risk becoming rigidified and absorbed back into the major. In other words, one of the characteristics of the minor is that it is always in process and becoming. ... A Deleuzian people-to-come will have this in common: their exclusion from dominant systems, their excessiveness to any model, perhaps their ‘failure to live up to any model’. ...The minor is deviant with respect to the majoritarian regime and always connotes a disruption of the dominant system, but a productive, creative disruption”. (Sholtz 2015, p.247-248)

Artist-teacher practice holds open a third-site of ethically playful inquiry through which the order of art and design education may be reconfigured, bringing minor relations and ways-of-being to the fore. It resists the instrumentalism of art and design education to prepare a people to have the expectation of an aesthetic life.